3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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[P.467-A] Teklum

[swayobel]." "What one?" asked his friend. "You won't be afraid?" asked J. And then he put his shirt and hat on the floor, spoke three words (my friend didn't say what), and raised his hat and shirt, and a horse appeared. He did this again and a bull appeared. He was a great *ʔaʔtawaʔ* [witch]. He stole a great deal. He was killed by five bullets.

Such stories of curers "who walk on both sides" (*ibeʔen ta ta mehl*) are favorites in the drinking sessions of Teklum. The power of curers inspires fear, so much so that some of the town presidents have been afraid of putting them in prison.

The open competition between curers serves to undermine the faith of the people in their guardianship function. This function was believed to have been acquired by the leaders from the *meʔtiktatik*, the ancestors, who were said to live in a cave in a hill near the town, from which came the progenitors of the present townspeople. To carry out this guardianship function, the animal spirits of the two leading curers roamed the streets at night, when the evil spirits were out, each one remaining within the limits of his own side of the dual division. In this role, the two major curers were called the *meʔiltatiletik*, a term derived from the one referring to the ancestors.

The loss of faith in the guardianship function of the curers was coincident with the loss of belief in the presence of the meʔtiktatik. Some deny that the meʔtiktatik live in the cave anymore, and others say they just appear on the day of their fiesta, the Day of the Cross in the Catholic calendar. This fiesta formerly was an important event in establishing the guardian power of the leader curers, since they were the only ones who dared enter the cave and talk to the ancestors. But this fear and this belief have gone. In 1960 one young man of the pueblo entered the cave on the day of the fiesta, when the curers were "deceiving the people" in claiming that they were talking to the ancestors; the fact that he dared enter the cave indicates an ambient distrust (in part resulting from verbal attacks by the priest, who at that time was gaining more power in the town). By now, on the Day of the Cross the church and civil officials, the women prayermakers, and an assistant of the priest, the *fiscal*, go to the cave, but the curers are no longer present, even as bystanders. The curers have tried to buttress belief in the guardianship of the ancestors by claiming that a nephew of the ancestors is now in residence in

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The authority of the president, however, depends on the use of legal sanctions of prison sentences and fines imposed by extracommunity enforcement agencies in the departmental capital. The weakness of these sanctions—the fine for homicide is 1,000 to 3,000 pesos or three to five years' imprisonment—means that these threats do not have a controlling effect on people's decisions to act. Homicide, carried out by individuals who feel themselves to be threatened, is a supplementary mechanism for social control. Cast in the idiom of witch-killing, homicide is the quasi-official execution of a community threat.

The breakdown in the former structural controls has not been compensated for by the intervention of extracommunity institutions. Attempts to circumvent killing are made by the priest, who counsels against it, warning that the killer will acquire the sins of the man he kills, and by the talking saint of Ixtapa, whom the Indians consult when they are pressed and who advises them to wait—their enemy will be killed for them. This advice is not sufficient to forestall all killings. Motivated by fear, some men still seek to eliminate the object of their fear.[7] The sense of the guardianship of the ancestors and their intermediaries, the curers, is lost along with the intervention of the civil authorities. The individual reacts, using his own means and trying to get sufficient consensus to avoid reprisal.

III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Homicide in the community of Teklum can be a statement of the fear of witchcraft, of revenge, or of quasi-official reprisal depending on the circumstances and social relationships involved. Even in this small, self-contained community, homicide does not have a single meaning, analyzable within a single framework of change.

Homicide is part of the expectation pattern of the town. The patterning of the acts of homicide in terms of time, place, and agent makes possible rules of avoidance both in long- and in short-term calculations for survival. The long-range rules require respect behavior to elders, equals, and juniors and the avoidance of abusive or boastful statements. The short-range rules are to avoid walking alone in the woods or milpas far from town, to stay home at night, and to stop drinking.

Despite the grim and expectable outcome of being killed, not all men heed these rules. The love of power and the projection of self into

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

000 An excellent discussion of the character of the neighbouring Indians of Guatemala, which applies well to these, by one who has lived long among them, is found in Sapper's "Der Charakter der Mittelamerikanisch Indianer."

Fig. 290—El Encanto, Chis. Bachajon girls.

648 771 793 Before passing on to the native culture, a little must be said of the outside influences that do so much to m o u l d it — the Church, the Government, and the Hacienda. The first of these occupies a very curious position indeed. While the Indians are ostensibly Christian, as will be shown later, in many ways they are still unconverted. It may be said, briefly, that they acknowledge two antagonistic worships. Of these, the Christian has publicly t h e upper hand. The Priests, accordingly, wield a tremendous influence among them, and did even more so in the past, when supported by the State. Our experience on this trip was that, on the whole, this influence was intelligently and b e n e f i c i a l l y used. To the Priests the Indians confide their troubles, to them they accord the greatest honour on the occasions of their visits to the villages. Yet, at the same time, the Indians conceal from them one-half of their worship, knowing them to be sworn to stamp it out.

[142] [291] [301] [302] →

[142] [291] [302] →

Fig. 291—El Encanto, Chis. Bachajon man and boy.

648 241 361 466 The Hacienda system has caused the formation of many small villages, as has been said above. In other cases, as with the Bachajon on the Encanto property, the Indians living at large on the distant lands of the

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

778 paper, brightened with colour added by a cigarette package, a label from a tin of beets in a deep red, a joke in German about the fall of the mark, of which the prevailing tone was pure viridian, and a page of advertising from the Saturday Evening Post. We gave [123] this family a chromo of a saint, which was immediately framed with a sort of wooden box, and set up beside the cross. The table below was used for laying odds and ends on, such as the spindle and a couple of empty aguardiente bottles.

782 788 177 178 Incense, *pom*, and candles, both extensively used by the Indians today, had a place in the old Maya ritual similar to that of the Catholic Church.

The Priest is an important figure to the Indians. They come to 793 him with respect to tell him their troubles, and receive him into their villages with rejoicing. At the same time, there is no doubt that they deliberately hoodwink him as to the orthodoxy of their faith.

796 Although it includes several non-Christian elements, a description of the fiesta observed at Tecojá will give a fair idea of the Tzeltal's church observances. Tecojá ranch has a village of about [241] twenty houses attached to it. The fiesta was held on the twenty-[648] second and twenty-third of June. By custom, the ranch had to allow the Indians this time off, as well as accepting the lowered efficiency on the following "cold grey dawn of the morning after." The owners had, moreover, to provide the rum for the whole celebration, in this case, two demi-johns.

The ranch chapel was thrown open and decorated with fir [794] branches and streamers. The proceedings were in charge of two older men, called *caporales*, who were distinguished by a cross-belting of red handkerchiefs. One house was set aside for the celebrations, in front of which was a table and three triangular, crimson banners with gold edges. By these drumming and flute-playing went on irregularly. Here was the official dispensary for rum, which was given out by the *caporales*. Inside the house, a palm-thatched one with stick walls, about fifteen feet square, some thirty [534] Indians, men and women, were squatting against the walls. There was an orchestra of a guitar and a mouth-organ, occasionally augmented by the piper, who would wander in from outside. This individual, although most amazingly drunk, managed to maintain his [533] musical ability until he fell asleep. The tune they played was like a rather wistful jig, but the time was lively. To this four couples [535] danced, the men facing the women, with a shuffling step not unlike waltzing. They kept very much in one place, but occasionally changed sides. The dancing was evidently a serious affair. This type is called in Spanish *zapatea*, in Tzeltal, *ahk'Out*.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

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621 794 527 of the legs and arms of our patron lord, Jesus, in reference to liquor). The prayer-like intonation, together with repeated invocation of the gods, gives [192] a sacred quality to the words.

[203] Liquor, referred to as "the gift of God" or "gift of the ancestors," is of crucial significance in both civil and religious ritual. Receiving an offering of liquor is tantamount to accepting part of the spiritual essence of the donor. Drinking in each of the domains—the house, the town hall, and the church—serves to tie together different sets of participants in the obligation system of service to the community. In Mauss' terms (1954:11) receiving the gift defines "a pattern of spiritual bonds between things which are to some extent parts of persons, and persons and groups, that behave in some measure as if they were things."

[203] In both inaugurations an attempt is made to control the intake of liquor so that the officials can function in the ritual. This is shown in the civil inauguration when the first policeman thinks about whether the police can take another drink and still carry out their duties. It is more explicit in the religious inaugurations when the cofrades warn the mayordomos that they should not drink so much that they "walk like madmen." The mayordomos then pass on the drinks served to them to the nakawanehetik who drink them and fall into a stupor.

621 794 527 • 793 875 In noting the difference between elicited and performed ritual, minimal changes in behavior provided clues to structural change. The change of custom as to where the meal of the mayordomos takes place (it now is given at the house of the cofrade rather than in the courtyard of the church) indicates a significant shift in the relation between the priest and the local religious leadership. The priest has gained control over the church since he has taken up residence in the parish house. The incident in which the confrontation took place is described in Chapter 9. Divergence of the performed from the expected ritual in the inauguration of the civil authority occurred when the schoolteacher delivered the oath instead of the former Ladino secretary. This revealed the schoolteacher's increasing power in his competition with the former cacique.

621 794 527 The rituals of both civil and religious inaugurations reveal the sense of the sacred obligation to the ancestors. Although both the roles and the scheduling of events are derived from outside the culture, the necessity for

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The informant failed to mention the following actions which I observed:

1. In raising the figure of Christ on the cross, the four regidores, in this context called *apultol* (probably from apostles), entered the church. Two of them stood at the head of the cross to receive the image raised from below by the other two.

2. The image was always handled with cloths so that no one's hand would be in contact with the surface.

3. The priest, standing behind a cloth screen, guided the figure up on the cross.

4. The priest gave a sermon about the significance of Easter and the life and death of Christ. He spoke of the crime of the Jews in killing Christ.[6]

In comparing the elicited and observed accounts, one can see clearly the censoring of the priest's role in the perception of the people. Even while the ceremony is in process, they ignore his appeals. For example, as the body of Christ was lowered from the cross, the priest exhorted the congregation to cry and give vent freely to their emotions in this most holy moment. There was no response from the audience, even after he waited several moments, pleading with them again not to feel embarrassment at their show of emotion, and becoming visibly annoyed at their impassivity. Finally, a woman dressed in Ladina clothing, rewarded him with the stylized wail of mourning.

Observation of the ceremony reveals evidence of attitude and belief coded in the staging, the costuming, the postures and gestures of respect or derision which cannot be elicited. Each element is an interpretative comment by those who direct and act the play. We are told that the Jew is the anti-Christ, but we learn that he is also a Ladino through his clothing, the cigarette, and the horseback ride. The Indians do not state that they castrate him in hoisting him upon the church, but their comments and ac-

6. Despite the fact that the Vatican had exonerated the Jews of the guilt for the murder of Christ the year before (1965), the priest spoke of the crime of the Jews. This time lag in communicating doctrine to the hinterlands would be an interesting problem to investigate.

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796 tions betray the intent. As he is hauled up by ropes and hung from the
182 bell tower "to show the world that he killed Christ," the mayordomos on
829 the ground who are assisting those up in the bell tower jab him with long poles. In this horseplay they symbolically castrate him: I heard one mayordomo say, *"Me?ĉunun,"* (transvestite) as one well-directed blow struck Judas. On Saturday, he is let down and given a ride on horseback around town. Formerly riding a horse was the prerogative only of Ladinos in the department of San Cristóbal Las Casas (Colby and Van den Berghe 1961). Placing Judas on a horse possibly has a symbolic value in identifying him as one of the hated dominant group who asserted this privilege.
[794] As he rides around town, the mayordomos solicit gifts from the people.
[756] Everyone gives fruits except the curers, who donate money. This transac-
[754] tion may indicate an obligation they feel toward Judas as one source of their power over witchcraft-derived illnesses. The money is used to buy liquor, called the "washing of the arms and legs of our Lord Eskipulas." The drinking is mandatory for all the mayordomos who have participated in the hanging of Judas.

The Judas figure, which was the church's symbol of the hated Semite, is made to appear as the enemy of the Indians, the Ladino. He symbolizes the sexual license of Ladinos with Indian women, the oppression of Indians by Ladinos, and the killer of Christ. In retaliation, the Indian symbolically castrate and hang him, and finally burn his body, thus dramatically vanquishing the alien in their midst. So far as I know, the priest is
• [793] unaware of the identification Indians make between the Jew and the Ladino. He prevented the ride from taking place the year I witnessed the Easter Week ceremonial on grounds that it was a pagan ritual; when he left town on Sunday, the mayordomos took Judas on his customary rounds.

796 The attitude toward Jesus, as the hero of the morality play, is ambiva-
796 lent. Martyrdom is not the way to win in Indian society. The feeling is
182 that power goes to the one who makes the sacrifice, and since Jesus was a
829 Ladino sacrifice, they have more power than the Indians. During the
[181] Caste War in Chiapas in 1868, the Indians crucified an Indian youth in
[782] the hope that they would find a savior as powerful as Jesus. To this day,
[175] Indians of To?ontahal seem not to identify Jesus as one of themselves,

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The belief in power derived from animal spirits was probably influenced by the Toltec belief in nahualism, or transformation of people after death into animals (Calnek 1962:22). The Toltec belief originated in the period of Mexican influence but had many local indigenous manifestations (Foster 1944). The integration of the two systems of power was brought about by calendar priests controlling the distribution of animal spirits (Calnek 1962:19). The degree of retention of calendrical knowledge and of belief in witchcraft gives us one of the best indices of acculturation in the area.[2] In Tzo?ontahal there is no remnant of calendar divination for ceremonial or predictive use. However, witchcraft based on belief in animal spirits continues to be an important factor in the contest for power. The technique of secrecy, of presenting a united front in the face of attempts by the outside Ladinos to tamper with the local social control system, persists to this day in the town.

An endemic problem in communities dominated by belief in witchcraft is control over the evil power of witches. The traditional control system in Tzo?ontahal operated through the guardianship of three sets of power-holders who checked up on each other: the ancestors, the curers, and the judges. The guardianship of the ancestors consisted in preventing any child possessed of a swayohel from the devil from growing up to abuse his power and in keeping any evil spirits from entering the town. The curers,

the Indians, whether out of cowardice or deceit, withdraw their accusation or claims, so that it is impossible to convict the evildoers for punishment; and for lack of sufficient proof they cannot be punished, or if there is enough basis to put them in prison, they sometimes disappear and flee to another jurisdiction and hide, denying their place of origin or changing their name.

2. In Oxchuk, calendar experts with the ability to divine the future still set the days for carrying out Catholic fiestas according to the twenty-day Maya ceremonial cycle. Each of the spirits symbolizing the twenty days wielded the power of good or evil. This provided the basis for predicting. When Villa Rojas studied the town in the 1940s, elders of patrilineal lineages controlled the behavior of members by causing sickness brought by their *lab*, or animal spirit (Villa Rojas 1947). In San Pedro Chenalhó, the principales exercise power through their *wayhel*, or animal spirit (Guiteras Holmes 1961). Nahuales of leaders of the patrilineages and principales are feared and respected in Larraínzar, although there is a growing discontent with their oppressive control (Holland 1963). Men believed to have thirteen nahuales figure as guardians and avengers for individuals in Pinola society, although the Indians of this community no longer have a hierarchy of civil offices through which their prestige can be publicly validated (Hermitte 1964).

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Conflict among Religious Functionaries

Conflict in the religious domain stems from the opposition of the traditional religious hierarchy and more recently that of the young leadership in the civil authority to the increasing power of the priest. In this conflict the fiscal is a middleman who often gets knocked by both sides.

The priest. The priest visits thirty other Indian communities of the department of San Cristóbal Las Casas in addition to Tzo'ontahal. In the fifteen years he has been working regularly in this town, he has gained increasing authority over the cofrades. He is assisted by two lay sisters who maintain the church and lead the evening prayers in his absence. He admits that, without them, his own work in the town would be more difficult because of the sexual jealousy of the townsmen. His relationship to the group of about forty *resadoras,* or female prayer-makers, who attend the evening prayers regularly and are the most vocal respondents in the mass, would be suspect without the presence of the lay sisters.

The priest tries to play the role of parish leader as well as spiritual leader. When medicine is available from missionary sources, he gives it to the sick. In his sermons, he advises people to use injections, which he makes available, against contagious diseases. He attempts to counsel the people, advising them not to kill, to steal, or to have illegal sexual affairs. In his role as pastor, the priest is influenced by missionary efforts of American Catholic organizations which have sent supplies to the area.

In recent years, the priest has challenged the authority of the head cofrade in activities occurring within and at the door of the church. The following incident, recounted by the son of the elder cofrade, marked a shift in control in these domains:

In 1961 the elder cofrade of Sacramento was drinking with the other mayordomos at the door of the church. The priest came out and demanded that they stop because this was the house of God. The elder replied that it was the custom of the pueblo, and he and the other men refused to leave. The priest went back into the church and returned with a gun in his hand. The mayordomos seized wood which they had gathered

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578 793 794 273 *to cook their meal in the yard of the church. They threatened to beat the priest with the wood, and he retreated into the church. He later announced that he would not give mass, or weddings, or baptism. We did not mind that he did not give the mass or would not give weddings, but the people were frightened if he would not give baptism. The mayordomos had a meeting, and they agreed to give up drinking in the church if the priest would continue to give baptism, but they would no longer care for the pigs or bring wood for him without payment. We pay him fifteen* [465] *pesos for an ordinary mass and forty pesos for a singing mass, so he should pay us for help. The priest was in agreement with the mayordomos.*

[264] As a result of this edict, the drinking has stopped and the mayordomos no longer eat the common meal in the church yard. Drinking was an act linked to eating, since the round of liquor served before the meal was "to prepare the stomach," and the drink after the meal was "to wash down the food." The shift to the house of the cofrade was a ready alternative in this community where the household is a recognized ritual domain.

793 794 178 The priest's control over the church has extended to control over the donation boxes and the saints' images. He now receives the money donated to the saints and does not permit a public accounting of the funds. Because of this, the civil officials accuse him of stealing some of the money. A recent incident recounted below by one of the prayer-reciters led to even more severe censure:

793 776 626 578 178 *The bishop visited our church, and when he looked under the silk robes of the Virgin Santa Lucia he found a wooden dress covered with gold paint. He told the priest to have the cloth dress removed. The people were very upset by this since they are very proud of the dresses bought for the Virgin. One of the prayer-reciters dreamed that the Virgin appeared before her in tears, saying she did not want to appear nude in public. We [the group of prayer-reciters] went to see the bishop to demand that the Virgin should wear her dress in church and that the priest be sent out of the town. The bishop refused. He said the Virgin did not feel cold because she was just a statue. Ha! How could she not feel cold?*

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The issue of the Virgin's clothing has increased the attacks on the priest. These have been aired in public meetings which take place on Sunday. Opposition to the priest has shifted from the old cofrades to the young leadership of the pueblo, men who wish to extend internal control over the church as well as the town hall. They tried to enlist the fiscal's help in getting rid of the priest, but he refused to cooperate. The president's brother, who serves as town treasurer, recounts the following exchange he had with the priest:

I saw Padre Juan take money from the box when I was mayordomo in the church. All of us mayordomos went to talk with him. I asked him how much money was turned in during the fiesta.

"The madres [*lay sisters*] *know," he said, "I don't."*

He called them, and they said, "We haven't counted the money. Come tomorrow."

The priest was very angry that we asked for an account. Pablo [*the fiscal*] *was too afraid to talk with him. When we left the church, I told Pablo, "You are in charge of the church. Why didn't you demand an account of the money in front of the church? We never got an account."*

Then we began to fight. Padre Juan doesn't want to leave the town. He has it too good here. He has a good yard with many fruit trees and a nice house. The Ladinos in Teopisca don't let him stay in their convento overnight. They are sharp, those damned Ladinos! We pay the padre thirty pesos every Sunday. Before he lived here, we used to have good music and more firecrackers for fiestas. Now he wants to stop all this. He was the one who ordered that all the money be collected. We wanted to go buy a gross of firecrackers. He said, "Why do you want firecrackers? It is the mass that has value. The saints don't want firecrackers or music."

He is very smart, the padre. He wants to keep the money for himself. Now we just get two firecrackers each morning of the fiesta and two in the evening. In Teopisca, they fire dozens of firecrackers. Here what is left over from the contributions for the fiesta remains in the box, and he takes it.

I went to get new clothing for the saint. In Comitán they wanted two

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hundred and fifty pesos for a dress. The padre said I couldn't buy it there. He told me to send for one in Mexico that cost five hundred and fifty pesos. He wanted to make the profit.

The fiscal. As an intermediary between the traditional religious officials and the priest, the fiscal is the target for both sides of the religious controversy. The priest selects the fiscal, but his retention of the post depends on his being accepted by the mayordomos. The tendency in the past fifteen years since a regular priest has been assigned to the community is to choose a man who speaks Spanish and can read and write, but who can be dominated by the priest. The following statement by a man who served in this post in 1929 defines the functions of the fiscal as the Indians see them:

When I served as fiscal, I knew how to sell [*the Indians use the verb* to sell *in reference to any propaganda—whether commercial, political, or religious*] *the catechism. After the prayer, I cleaned the patio. I held the key to the church. I saw* [*in the sense of watch over*] *all the mayordomos. I bought the candles and incense for the saints. At midday the mayordomos and I left the church and went home. There was no padre living here then, and the padre from San Cristóbal came only on the days of San Francisco, Virgin Santa Lucía, San Pedro the Martyr, and Santiago. Each Sunday, the ten mayordomos and I entered the church and prayed in the true language.*

Prayers are now given in Spanish by the fiscal and the prayer-reciters under the guidance of the lay sisters, who remain most of the time in the convento. The fiscal, as a consequence, is no longer selected on the basis of his ability to recite the pat'o'tan. Since one of the main tasks of the fiscal is to take care of the church, several recent incumbents have been jeered as being like women, cleaning house and responding to the bidding of the priests. Some have suggested that one was a homosexual. They blame the fiscales for letting control over the domain of the church fall into the hands of the priest.

A man who had filled the post himself, described the careers of several former fiscales:

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In 1912, Bernardo was fiscal. He knew how to pray well. About nine in the morning, the girls [prayer-reciters] gathered in the church and heard prayer in common. Then he borrowed money from the church and did not return it. He left for the finca with his father and three men. His wife went with her children. He fled because he didn't have the money, and he never returned. He sold his house in town to buy food. He died there in the finca. The girls remembered him because he was a friend, and they bought a candle for twenty cents.

Another fiscal, Antonio, began to give prayers to the same girls who accompanied him. He knew how to pray very well, and he prayed each Sunday. Then he died.

Then Carlos passed as fiscal. He knew how to pray from memory. The same girls learned, and all sang the prayer. Then that fiscal sold the tablecloths; he sold the candle holders; he sold everything. Therefore the cofrades did not want him. They said, "Go away because you are not good." God was going to punish him because he sold everything in the church.

In 1929 the pueblo named Ceferino [the informant, who refers to himself in the third person]. He served until he was made president in 1937.

In 1938, Antonio was chosen by the pueblo, but soon they did not want him because he was always ordering the pueblo to do work. He charged a lot for the fiestas, but he did not buy firecrackers or clothing for the saints. In a mass meeting they asked him to leave.

In 1939 Miguel put himself in office. The pueblo did not choose him. He did not know how to pray. He knew a little by memory because he heard what Antonio had said in his prayers, but he did not know the catechism. He didn't want to leave the church, but the pueblo spoke much against him.

The padre was against Miguel because he had begun to take advantage of the trips with the priest to sell the contraband liquor that he distilled. Some maintain that it was during his period as fiscal that the power shifted from the cofrades to the priest. He was accused of stealing the money donated to the saint, a sum of about 300 pesos. Although the money was returned, he is still considered guilty.

Miguel's successor, the present incumbent Pablo, served as president while he was fiscal.

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while he was fiscal. He let control over the key to the church and the donation boxes slip into the hands of the priest. His opponents accused him of weakness and failure to act in the interest of the town. The careers of these fiscales illustrate the pitfalls for those filling the post. First, there is the temptation for personal gain, since the fiscal has access to the money of the saints: in the past three fiscales have been charged with robbery. Second, there is the problem that the fiscal serves two masters, the priest and the head cofrade, each of whom has different standards of conduct for the role: when the selection of the fiscal was in the hands of the cofrades, they chose a man who knew the pat'o'tan and who was to deal directly with the curers in rituals at the cave of the ancestors and in the homes of the cofrades; now he is chosen by the priest who prefers a young, literate man. If the fiscal follows the commands of the priest, he runs into problems with the cofrades. This was the difficulty with Antonio, who was put out of office by the cofrades because he yielded to the priest's demands to improve the convento and the church. As long as the conflict in interests between the priest and the traditional authorities exist, there is no successful position for the fiscal to take.

Conflict and Social Change

In the contest for leadership which has and is occurring, the following observations can be made on the basis of the events described.

1. The community has successfully incorporated the young, literate men into the framework of the traditional hierarchy. This has been accomplished by expanding the scope of activities of the president and síndico and by relieving them of serving in the lower posts of the hierarchy.

2. The ceremonial role of the principales serves as a symbol of continuity in government both in the tie they have with the past and in the annual changeover of officials.

3. The threat of foreign Indians in the township misusing their skills in dealing with the outside world has been overcome by removing them from office and preventing them from filling high posts.

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4. In a series of confrontations, the civil officials have challenged the social control functions of the curers. Witch-killings in which many of the victims have been curers have minimized but not overcome the power of these men.

5. The priest has succeeded in establishing control over the church, but the Indians may yet succeed in deposing him, a plan they were putting into effect when I left town.

The Indians are now aware of their rights to limit—or eliminate if necessary—the self-appointed caciques. The new cacique promotes the community welfare not only in his rhetoric but in the services he performs for the officials. His involvement in political affairs is tolerated, not encouraged, and the officials are ready to turn to alternative sources of aid in their activities.

The involvement of the PRI in local elections has not introduced a new center of power in the political arena. Political factions are based on economic interests contained within the town, and the autonomy of the town has in no way been affected by leadership from party headquarters in the state capitol. The community and the party use each other for their own ends in almost complete ignorance of what is occurring in the domain of the other.

The system of beliefs and understandings has changed along with these organizational changes. The most significant change has been the waning belief in the guardianship of the ancestors. The absence of the curers at the fiesta of the caves means that they no longer have this ritual occasion to validate their claims by communicating with the ancestors. The loss of leadership and of a hierarchy of prestige within the ranks of curers has removed internal controls over the profession and further undermined their position. The diminishing respect with which they are treated in the town hall and the increasing number of murders of curers accused of witchcraft is directly related to the loss of belief in their power as guardians. Since they were not an integral part of the civil-religious hierarchy, as the curers were in Oxchuk (Villa Rojas 1947), this has not upset the hierarchy, but it has changed the balance of power in the wider community.

The diminishing significance of the leadership of the principales is tied

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

621 to the loss of belief in the curers. The principales were formerly conceived
756 to be overseers of the curers, men who, because of their advanced age,
178 could determine whether the curers were acting in the interest of the town. With the loss of this social control function, along with the loss of other functions such as holding public funds and helping the judges to interpret the law, they have declined to the level of ceremonial figures dissociated from political action.

621 The forms of political organization remain the same, but there has been
178 a shift in the balance of power from leaders whose authority rested on guardianship linked with the ancestors to leaders who can deal with the external power structure. The emergent forms of political organization can be partially assessed in the meaning participants assign to the events which precipitated this process of change. To paraphrase George Herbert Mead (1938:liii) it is the "organization of perspectives" concerning the past events and the present conditions which will effect the emergent
829 forms. The analytical problem can be phrased with the questions, "In
578 what dialectical terms is the conflict cast?" and "What changes do the
794 members of the community perceive as an outcome of the struggle?"
621 Whereas in the colonial period the conflict between the Indians and their
177 Spanish conquerers was seen as a struggle for control between Catholicism
178 and traditional religion, today the conflict is phrased as one of opposed economic interests. In the civil sphere, factional opponents seek the support of extra-communal power holders to gain their ends. In the religious
• [193] sphere, the Indians see the conflict as one in which their control over the church and the income derived from it is opposed to the priest's growing influence.

829 In this reorganization of perspectives, the Indians share some of the
62 goals of the dominant society, but they continue to oppose themselves to
182 the Ladino world. For this reason they are willing to preserve the form of the civil-religious hierarchy as a means of asserting their independence from the dominant society. They see the community not only as a defensive screen against the outside world, but as a springboard for entry into the national economic and political life. They are now consciously taking advantage of pro-Indian sentiment to secure a preferred position in this society. Their awareness of their advantage over the deculturated Indian is

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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The townspeople feel that they own the church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade (Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect.

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic offerings to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direction of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sisters indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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Moon" will not give way to the sun if her envy is aroused by seeing such things. These spirits of the heavens have greater control over natural forces than the spirits of the church, or saints. The saints have only limited influence over the souls of particular crops and chickens; people say "they are just of the pueblo."

The distinction between the "big saints of the church" and the lesser saints is recognized in the rituals accorded each group. Four of the saints are given big fiestas which are longer, require more expenditures, and involve more people than the fiestas for the lesser saints. Few distinctions are made between the personalities of the big saints and those of the lesser saints. They are big because their fiestas are big. The fact that the townspeople have selected four from the rostrum of saints given them suggests a link with the four guardian gods of the pre-Conquest pantheon, but except for San Pedro the Martyr's identification with Chac, or Cha'uk in Tzeltal, I could not make any other associations.

To say that there is a system of beliefs does not rule out inconsistencies. Some contradictions can coexist without giving rise to tension. Awareness of incongruence either between beliefs, or between beliefs and behavior associated with them, arises in specific events in which the conflict becomes apparent—that is, when the participants must make choices between alternatives that affect their interests.

The people do not recognize any division between pre- and post-Conquest spiritual entities. Sometimes two personalities from Catholic sources may be equated with one of pre-Conquest origin in order to fit a story format, as in the case of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, with K'oł (Chapter 8). The priests, who had a special dispensation to make whatever cultural translations were necessary in teaching the doctrines of the church (Doctrina Cristiana Lima 1584 III, 3, Recopilación de Leyes, Ley 22 lib. cited in Lamb 1956:531), are responsible for some of the reworking of the two traditions. But local elaborations reveal indigenous cognitive patterning.

Contradictions in myths concerning the origin of crops show some gaps in the union of pre-and post-Conquest legends. The gift of corn is attributed in one myth to the patroness, Santa Lucía, who received it from the patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk. Another myth gives

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango .
Aguacatenango

175 648 under the administrative jurisdiction of the Provincia de los Llanos.[1] They were, and still are, part of the same Curato of [093] the local Catholic Church, which was under secular clergy, as opposed to most villages in the area which were under Dominican jurisdiction. Up until 1854 they were subjected to the same changes with respect to the administrative districts of the State of Chiapas (districts which were rearranged practically every time 175 there was a change of government). In 1854, however, the local 621 districts were reorganized into Municipalidades (the closest 648 English equivalent being a county); Amatenango became attached to 631 Teopisca, the nearest Ladino-Indian town, as a part of the ninth Municipio, while Aguacatenango became dependent upon the fourth Municipio of Comitan, together with the towns of San Bartolomé (also a mixed Ladino-Indian town), Totolapa and Concordia (Trens, 1942).

631 621 At the present time Amatenango is an independent Municipio, having been separated from Teopisca in 1937, while Aguacatenango is an Agencia of the Municipio of Venustiano Carranza. Both com- [692] munities are, however, attached to the equivalent ladino towns in [651] similar ways because of their economic dependence, because such disputes as are not solved within the confines of the village are sent to the juzados of the towns, and because the offices of the Tax Collectors and Ejidos are situated in these ladino towns.

175 669 621 631 Neither of the two communities became directly involved in the Indian Uprisings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

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[1] San Bartolome de los Llanos; today known as Venustiano Carranza.

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Aguacatenango

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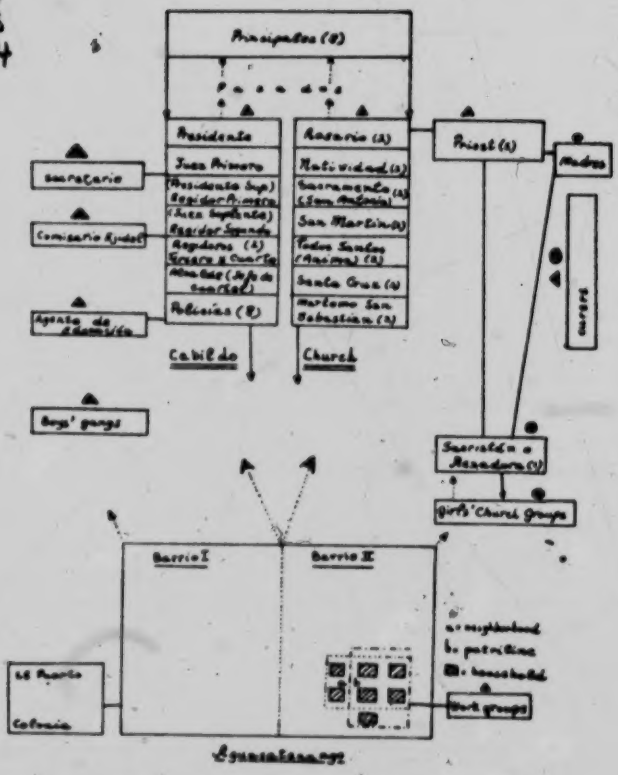

Fig. 2.--Hierarchy Structure in Aguacatenango

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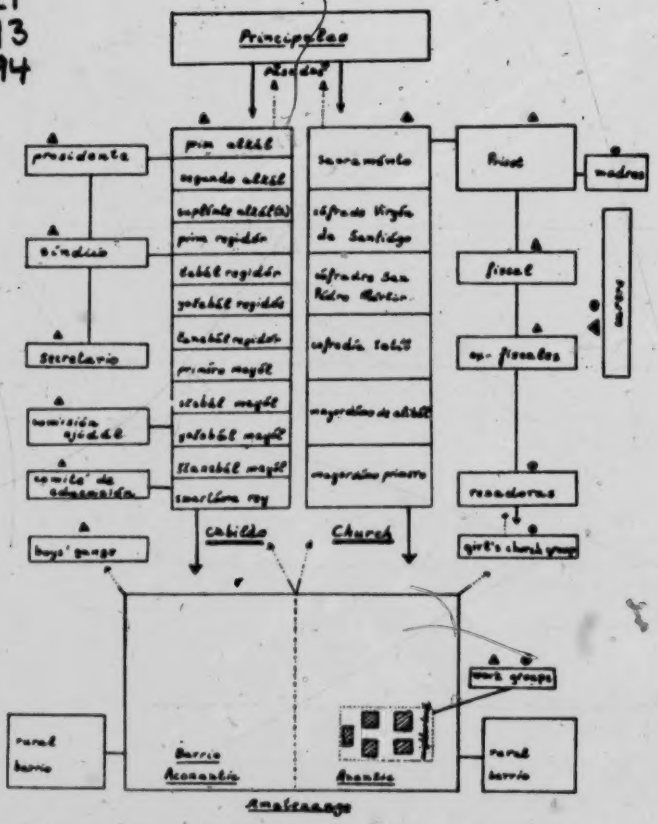

Fig. 3.--Hierarchy Structure in Amatenango

Third, there was opposition on the score that the president had never passed in any other public office. The only incident revealing the discontent was the firing of eight shots at (or above) the president's brother following the house festival on the eve of the inauguration.

The principales, who "formerly were the ones who ruled," no longer have a part in the power struggle

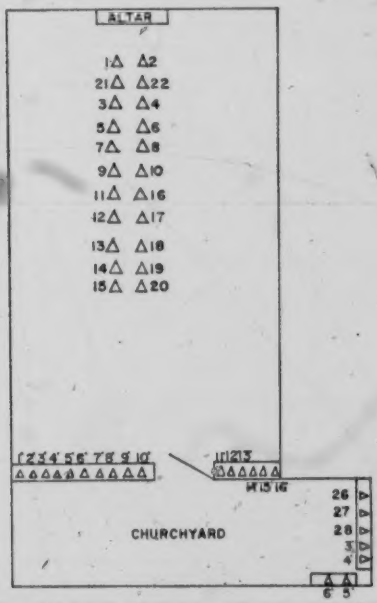

CHART 11 — NEW OFFICIALS INSIDE CHURCH, NEW YEAR'S DAY

OFFICIALS:
1'-16' Mayordomos

Remaining numbers refer to officials listed in Charts 7-9.

which centers on party membership and economic competition. Their ceremonial role in rituals is preserved as a link with the past as well as a sign of continuity between old and new officials.

In the inauguration of the religious officials, divergence in the elicited and the observed event (App. 2, column 4) occurred first of all in the shift of locale for the common meal from the churchyard to the house of the *?ali?bal* instead of in the churchyard (App. 2, Q. 19). This was a clue to the power struggle going on in the church. When I questioned my informant about the disparity, he told me the following story:

[P. 223-B]

Three years before [in 1961] my father was the *tatik* of Sacramento. One day he and the other mayordomos were drinking at the door of the church. The priest came out and demanded that they stop because this was the house of God. The *tatik* replied that it was the custom of the pueblo, and he and the other men refused to leave. The priest went back into the church and returned with a gun in his hand. The mayordomos seized wood which they had gathered in the yard of the church. They threatened the priest with this and he went back into the church. He announced that he would not give Mass, or perform wedding or baptismal ceremonies. We did not mind if he did not give the Mass or would not give weddings, but the people were frightened if he would not give baptism. The mayordomos had a meeting and they agreed to give up drinking in the church if the priest would continue to give baptism, but they

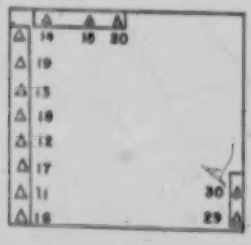

CHART 13 — KITCHEN OF POLICE, AFTER CHURCH (ELICITED)

Numbers refer to role terms listed in Charts 7 and 10.

would no longer care for the pigs or bring wood for the priest without payment. We pay him 15 pesos for an ordinary Mass and 40 pesos for a sung Mass, so he should pay us for help. The priest was in agreement with the mayordomos.

My informant had not realized that the ban affected eating in the yard of the church, but it was implied because liquor is served before the meal "to prepare the stomach" *(ya ʔiṭal ʔikoip weʔeletik)* and after the meal "to wash down the food" *(yaʔlel weʔelil)*.

The statement on who defines what performances, and in what setting, provides an index to the locus of power. The priest is gaining more control over the building, maintenance, and developments around the church. The mayordomos give at least a half-day's labor to the priest's projects each Sunday. When they cannot work, they must pay the elder *kobraria* two pesos for a half-day's work missed, or 4 pesos for a full day. The proceeds are used to buy liquor, which the mayordomos drink. Thus the social control is ex-

9tNash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tzo?ontahal

Thus the social control is exerted through the traditional hierarchy, but the benefits of the labor go toward the priest's projects. The priest speaks with some satisfaction of the increasing control the "church" (he) has over the people. He maintains that this is because the people are more "civilized." For him, the indices to civilization are the facts that there is no drinking in the church, there is greater attendance at Mass, and more people are wearing Ladino clothing.

The second divergence in the elicited and observed accounts for the religious inauguration occurred when the civil officials, including the town secretary and síndico, assisted the religious officials in counting the money collected for the fiesta.

An important supplement to the behavorial data were the unsolicited comments of informants. Their anecdotes often gave me clues to their involvement in the gamesmanship of operating within culturally defined patterns. Although the informant focuses on the formal question, his growing boredom with the sequence (Who sat next to him? What did they do next? Who was there?) leads him to muse about the associated ideas and images which did interest him, often self-damaging or negative aspects of the culture which he might want to hide if questioned directly. The technique resembles that of the astronomer instructing the novice stargazer: "If you want to see the Pleiades, look at Jupiter, and out of the corner of your eye the nebulous cluster of stars of the Pleiades becomes visible."

The following illustrates how this free association emerged in the formal eliciting procedure:

Informant 2 constantly reiterated the danger his brother would encounter in undertaking the post of president as we discussed inauguration procedures. For example, when he gave me a list of participants at the Judge's house when his father took on that post, he mentioned the name of a widow, Cika, and provided the unsolicited information that her husband had been shot on December 16, 1963, the fiesta of Halal Me?tik Santalusia. Informant's statement: "He did not know he had an enemy, and so he walked alone that night. Each fiesta someone is killed. During the fiesta of San Francisco this year, another man in Bočibal was killed. No one knows why. He was knifed with a machete. I never go out alone at night because of the fights with the cooperative. They [the members of the opposing cooperative] are very hard *(ha? ben bolik)*. They claim they will kill us."

What prompted the next revelation was my com-

[P. 224-B]

9:Nash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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621*
inauguration is deduced from both elicited and ob- 105
served behavior. These data complement the elicited 182
material on structure in rounding out the ethno- 794
graphic model of social reality. 554
571

Specification of the behavioral data on which struc- 121
tural and functional statements are made should pro-
vide the basis for more precise comparisons over time
and between communities. I turn to the observed in- [571]
teraction to summarize the evidence for microchange [178]
within the community.

Outside of the formally prescribed behavior sched- 621*
uled in the inauguration, a struggle for power is 105
going on which is leading to important organiza- 178
tional changes in the town. This was suggested in the 578
substitution of the schoolteacher for the former La-
dino secretary in the act of giving the oath. Factional
struggle of the leaders of the new enterprises was
revealed in this substitution. Further evidence of
change is seen in the redefinition of the president's
position in relation to that of the principales. The
potential power which the post offers to the incum-
bent and those who back him is now recognized. The
risks are higher as the competition for the post
increases.

In the religious sphere the priest's increasing con- 105
trol over the domain of the church is seen in the shift 793
of setting for the common meal from the churchyard 178
to the *?ali?bal's* house. This evoked the story of the 794
open confrontation of the priest and cofrades a few 578
years before. Public counting of funds by civil officials
suggests an attempt by the new leadership to thwart
the priest's dominance over the cofrades.

In the emergent struggle for power within the com- 621*
munity, we see not just a defensive reaction to La- 105
dinos by Indians of a corporate community, but a 178
play for stakes in the same world. This suggests that 829
the corporate community, now and in the future,
serves not so much as an insulation from the outside
world as in the past but as a springboard for the entry
of the Indians into fuller participation in the national
society.

[P 228-B]